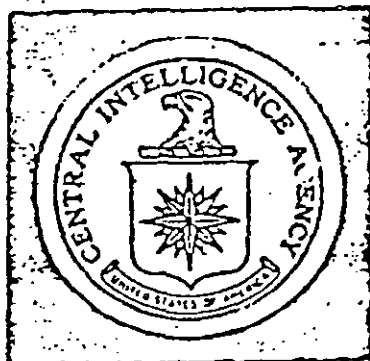


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DIRECTORATE OF
INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence Memorandum

COOPERATION AMONG LATIN AMERICAN TERRORIST AND
INSURGENT GROUPS

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21 September 1970
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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
21 September 1970

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

Cooperation Among Latin American
Terrorist and Insurgent Groups

Summary

Cooperation among Latin American revolutionary groups across national boundaries is not extensive, although there are frequent contacts between members of the various groups. There has been no well-established movement to carry out guerrilla operations simultaneously in several Latin American countries. Insurgency movements thus far have remained essentially national in scope rather than international. In the absence of any truly "Latin American" liberation movement, there are Bolivian, Venezuelan, Guatemalan, etc. liberation movements. Cuba, however, continues to provide funds, training and propaganda support for revolutionaries and, in a few instances has assigned Cubans to assist guerrillas.

From time to time some groups have tried to establish a "continental" or "international" insurgency movement; efforts in this direction appear to be making some headway.

Note: This memorandum was produced solely by CIA. It was prepared by the Office of Current Intelligence and coordinated with the Office of National Estimates and the Directorate for Plans.

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[REDACTED]

Most revolutionary groups in Latin America have struggled merely to survive, with little promise of duplicating Fidel Castro's success in Cuba nearly twelve years ago. In some countries (Uruguay, Brazil, and Guatemala), leftist extremists are putting more emphasis on urban terrorism than in the past, but traditional guerrilla warfare seems to be the "ideal" revolutionary approach for most would-be insurgents. Despite the failure of the extremists to have achieved the overthrow of any government, guerrillas continue to present a troublesome problem in Guatemala, Colombia, Venezuela, and Bolivia. Urban terrorists have challenged security forces, sometimes by dramatic acts--such as kidnaping foreign diplomats in Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Bolivia--and by varying methods in other countries.

In virtually every Latin American country, deep differences among extreme leftist groups have hindered mutual cooperation. In Colombia, for example, there are at least three separate active guerrilla groups, with differences in loyalties, tactics, connections, and other factors that prevent collaboration. Similar fragmentation exists in other countries, including Uruguay, Guatemala, and Brazil.

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~~SECRET~~Current Situation

1. [REDACTED]

On occasion, nationals of one country have served with a guerrilla group elsewhere, sometimes in order to demonstrate solidarity with another revolutionary movement. But rarely are more than a handful of guerrillas from one country found with a force in another country.

[REDACTED] the pro-Cuban National Liberation Army (ELN), which on 19 July staged a well-organized raid on a mining camp north of La Paz with a force of approximately 70 men. Of this number, about 11 were non-Bolivians, according to an ELN announcement. One Argentine was among the 10 ELN members who traveled to Cuba last month after being released in exchange for two German technicians captured earlier.

2. Whatever links that exist or have existed among Latin American subversive groups must be evaluated against a background of Cuban involvement in promoting and assisting "wars of liberation." Ever since he took power in 1959, Fidel Castro has placed major importance on fostering revolution in Latin America. Although Che Guevara's defeat and death in the Bolivian guerrilla campaign has led Cuba to be more cautious and more selective in assisting subversive groups, Castro still is determined to generate revolution in the hemisphere. Castro reaffirmed this goal in a speech on 22 April in which he pledged to assist Latin American revolutionary movements.

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3. Most Cuban assistance to extremists involves funding, training, and propaganda support. Under appropriate circumstances, Cubans might be dispatched to steel a promising guerrilla force.

From time to time Castro has also shown interest in helping to provide common direction to subversive efforts throughout the hemisphere.

Another important development over the past year has been an easing of the deep differences between Havana and the pro-Moscow Communist parties in Latin America. This new trend may tend to help break down the barriers between extremists within the hemisphere and encourage their cooperation on some matters.

Bolivia

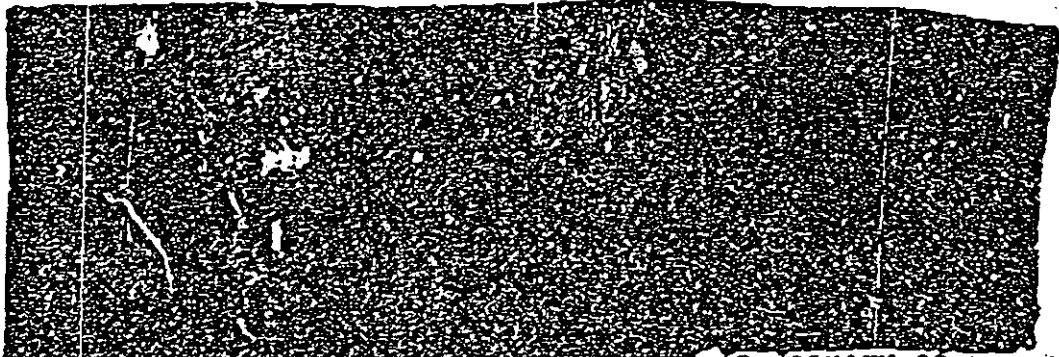
4. Since "Che" Guevara arrived in Bolivia in 1966 to initiate a guerrilla movement as the vanguard for a large-scale uprising, the insurgency movement in that country has acquired an international aura. Guevara viewed the guerrilla operations there as the beginning of a revolution that would spread throughout the continent. Despite Guevara's personal failure, his concept has been retained by the Bolivian guerrillas. The ELN is in a sense a revival of the Guevara operation. Its most important founder was "Inti" Peredo who had been a member of the Guevara band. When Peredo died, his younger brother "Chato" became a prominent leader of the organization.

5. A number of Latin American countries have provided recruits for the ELN.


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In January of this year the Cuban Communist Party newspaper Granma reported that a committee for the support of the ELN had been formed in Chile. Carlos Altamirano, a senator who is an extremist leader in the Socialist Party, is head of the committee. (Salvador Allende, the probable next president, is the leader of the party.) Other Socialists and MIR members constitute the bulk of the committee's membership. The MIR, which has recently had success in carrying out terrorist operations--including bank robberies, and raids on military posts to capture arms--is itself in contact with similar non-Chilean groups in addition to their contacts with Cuba.




Uruguay

6.



7. The Tupamaros, one of the most publicized urban terror organizations in the hemisphere, has been willing to serve as a support group for other Latin American guerrillas.



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9. Perhaps even more active than the Tupamaros in promoting external contacts has been the Revolutionary Movement of Uruguay (MRO), which split from the pro-Moscow Uruguayan Communist Party in 1968. The MRO has a military action arm called the Uruguayan Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARO). Although less successful than the Tupamaros, the MOR has been active in urban terrorism--primarily in bank robberies. Part of the MRO's long-range plans calls for assisting the formation of guerrilla movements throughout the southern cone of South America.

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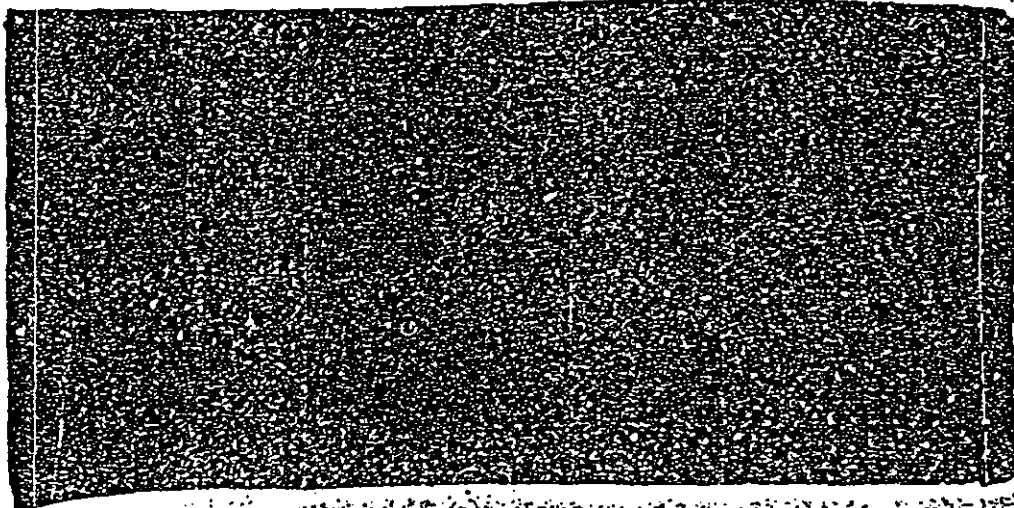
Argentina and Brazil

II. In Argentina the Argentine Leftist Revolutionary Movement (MIRA), one of the elements that formed the Argentine Liberation Front (FAL)

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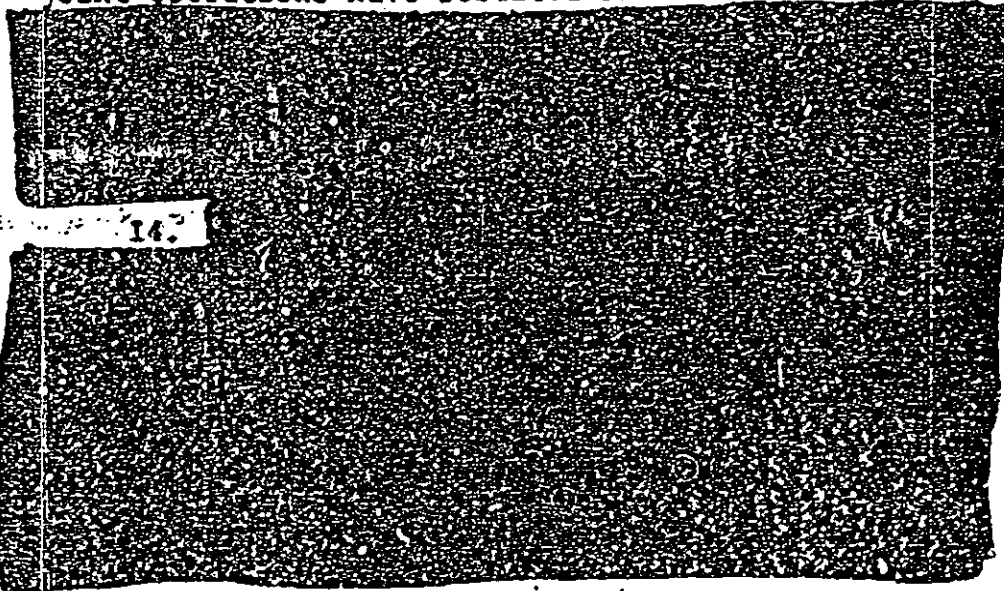
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Central America

13. Central American Communist parties and guerilla groups are in frequent contact. Representatives of the various groups often hold meetings to discuss cooperative action and policy, although no significant joint operations have resulted from these discussions.



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15. In Costa Rica the Communist Party (PVP), although not a legal party, enjoys considerable freedom of operations

16. Contacts exist between subversive groups elsewhere in Latin America

Conclusions

17. For the most part contacts among Latin American terrorist and insurgent groups appear to be limited to support activities. The most active interchange and cooperation probably exist among revolutionary movements in the southern cone of the South American continent

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18. Chile, which has long been a relatively open country for extreme leftists, will become even more so if Salvador Allende is confirmed as president by congress on 24 October. Allende would be cautious enough to avoid provoking military reaction against any undue tolerance of the MIR and other extremists, but revolutionary groups in Chile and nearby countries would probably enjoy more freedom for carrying out support operations in Chile. The degree to which revolutionary groups would be allowed to use the country as a base of operations would, however, be limited to some extent by the orthodox Communist Party--a member of Allende's coalition--which seeks to restrict violence-prone groups such as the MIR.

19. Fidel Castro would strongly endorse joint operations as a means of establishing a sustained guerrilla movement with potential to expand "the anti-imperialist struggle." A recent Radio Havana broadcast took note of a new "international army" operating in Bolivia against the Ovando government. Cuba's more selective approach to promoting armed revolution may have the effect of leading Latin American revolutionary groups to look to themselves for support. Thus, for various reasons, there may be more incentive now than before for extremists to consider the possibility of increased cooperation across national borders. In a sense, any greater interest in collaboration would also reflect the generally poor record of Latin American extremists, who still seem to have at best only limited potential for fomenting revolution.

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